

EXECUTIVE SESSION

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. LINCOLN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Senator LINCOLN pertaining to the introduction of S. 997 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. LINCOLN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Madam President, as in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 64, the nomination of R. Gil Kerlikowske to be Director of National Drug Control Policy, with the time until 2 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees; that at 2 p.m., the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nomination; that upon confirmation, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that no further motions be in order; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until 1:45 p.m. today. We have the leaders of Afghanistan and Pakistan here today. They are important meetings. We have a number of things, and it would be better if we are not in session. I appreciate everyone allowing this consent to go forward.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 12:46 p.m., recessed until 1:45 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico).

NOMINATION OF R. GIL KERLIKOWSKE TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of R. Gil Kerlikowske of Washington to be Director of National Drug Control Policy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time until 2 p.m. is equally divided.

The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, our Nation's next drug czar is going to face a number of key challenges. The Office of Drug Control Policy is going to play a leading role in addressing the drug-related violence in Mexico and along the southwest border—an area where, if we don't take the right steps to tackle problems today, we will most certainly see the spread of violence and drugs into towns and residences thousands of miles from the Mexican border.

We also know from history that as the economy falls, crime rises, and that crime is growing at the same time law enforcement agencies across the country face painful cutbacks and greater strains on their personnel and resources. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the next drug czar to ensure that law enforcement at all levels is working smarter, forging new relationships, and leveraging the resources they have. We will also have to address the rise in prescription drug abuse, the continued scourge of methamphetamine use, and the violence that affects so many of our communities due to drug trafficking.

Seattle Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske is the right man to address these big challenges. Chief Kerlikowske brings a fresh new perspective to the job as the Nation's drug czar. He is a cop's cop, and his perspective was shaped patrolling the streets in Florida, New York, and Washington State. Along the way, he has helped thousands of people touched by violence and drugs. He and the law enforcement officials that he has led have been on the front lines of our Nation's war against illicit narcotics and in keeping our communities safe. And I know that he will bring this hands-on perspective to his job as our Nation's drug czar.

Chief Kerlikowske also understands the importance of partnerships between ONDCP and our State and local law enforcement communities, because he has been on the local level. As the head of the Major Cities Chiefs Organization, which represents the 63 largest police departments in the United States, he sees the common problems facing cities across the country. I have seen this firsthand in his work as Seattle police chief.

This past December, under Chief Kerlikowske's leadership, the Seattle Police Department, in cooperation with county, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies, he was able to bust a drug ring that stretched from Mexico to Idaho to Seattle.

Chief Kerlikowske worked cooperatively to create a regional response to gang violence in Seattle and in King County. He built a coalition with the King County Sheriff's Office and other King County police chiefs, with the Washington Department of Corrections, the ATF, and other community leaders to tackle persistent gang violence in our neighborhoods. These multiagency, Federal-local partnerships require cooperation and compromise, and they require a leader with Chief Kerlikowske's experience to bring them all together. Local police chiefs and sheriffs have told me they are sorry to see him go, but the Nation is gaining a true innovator in Gil Kerlikowske. I know he is going to continue to work on these relationships with State and local law enforcement across the country, and this approach will make all of our communities safer.

Chief Kerlikowske also understands that the drug war will not only be won on the streets but in our classrooms and in our homes. For the past 9 years, he has been the national board chairman for the group Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. Under the guidance of Chief Kerlikowske, this group has focused their efforts on the importance of prevention by fighting for early childhood intervention funding, afterschool programs, and efforts to prevent child abuse. Chief Kerlikowske knows the best way to end the use of drugs and spread of crime is to prevent it, and he will bring that commonsense approach to ONDCP.

Chief Kerlikowske has served the people of our State well, and he will serve the people of the Nation well also. I am so proud to support his confirmation. In a few short minutes, the Senate will be voting on this confirmation, and I am very proud to stand here today to tell my colleagues they will be glad they voted with us to confirm this nomination.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I would like to take a minute to briefly discuss my opposition to the nomination of Gil Kerlikowske to be Director of National Drug Control Policy. Chief Kerlikowske has had a long career in law enforcement, and he enjoys the support of many of his colleagues. However, the concerns I have about certain aspects of his record prevent me from being able to support his nomination to be Director of ONDCP.

The principal purpose of ONDCP is to establish policies, priorities, and objectives for the nation's drug control program. The office has arguably never been more important, as the United States seeks to deal with the violent drug cartels whose influence has begun to cross into our borders. Yet Chief

Kerlikowske has no experience with international drug interdiction, which is among my chief concerns with this nomination.

Although I suppose my concerns about Chief Kerlikowske's lack of experience with international drug enforcement could be overcome by a strong record of domestic enforcement, I am afraid that Chief Kerlikowske lacks such a record. Instead, he has gained a reputation for being soft on marijuana enforcement, once stating that pursuing possession offenses was "not a priority." Despite local attitudes on this issue, as the top law enforcement officer in Seattle, Chief Kerlikowske has an obligation to make all crime a priority.

Chief Kerlikowske's lax record on marijuana enforcement has even led many pro-marijuana groups to endorse his nomination. In this country, marijuana remains a Schedule I drug and is known as the "gateway drug," because it can lead to the abuse of more dangerous substances. For this reason, the next ONDCP Director must be a strong opponent of marijuana and all illegal drugs, as well as act as an aggressive enforcer of the laws regulating these harmful narcotics. I am concerned that Mr. Kerlikowske does not have such a record or reputation.

I have other concerns about Chief Kerlikowske's record that I will not detail here. Those concerns include: his decision to withhold police from a riot that broke out in 2001, in which a 20-year-old college student was murdered; his direction for police not to check immigration status or take action on any such violations; and his record on gun control. With respect to the Second Amendment, at a time when facts about the influence of American guns in Mexican drug cartel violence are being distorted—often with the intent to restrict the constitutional rights of American citizens—it is crucial that we have leaders who are ready to defend those rights. I am concerned that Chief Kerlikowske will not be such a defender.

In short, Chief Kerlikowske's lack of experience with international interdiction and his record of lax enforcement of domestic laws respecting drugs—particularly marijuana—and other crimes leaves me concerned that he is the wrong person to lead ONDCP at this crucial time. Therefore, I will oppose his nomination.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, in March, Gil Kerlikowske was tapped by the President to be the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Chief Kerlikowske is certainly qualified for this position. He is a 36-year veteran of law enforcement. He has been the chief of police of four police departments, and most recently chief of the Seattle Police Department. If confirmed, Chief Kerlikowske would be charged with the mission to develop and implement the Nation's drug control strategy. My hope is that he would be confirmed today.

The formal announcement of Seattle Chief Gil Kerlikowske as the new Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy was heralded by none other than Vice President BIDEN. In 1982, Vice President BIDEN saw the need for a Cabinet-level position to coordinate the efforts of various agencies. He is credited with coining the term "Drug Czar." Then Senator BIDEN was always a champion for elevating this position to Cabinet-level status. During our time on the Senate Judiciary Committee we often collaborated on keeping the Office of National Drug Control Policy relevant in the country's efforts to curb illicit drug use and increase education. Unfortunately, Chief Kerlikowske will be assuming a position that was downgraded by the administration. The Obama administration has elected to downgrade the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy from a Cabinet-level position to a presidential appointment in the Executive Office. This is a major departure from the precedent which was set in 1993 under President Clinton.

As the Mexican drug cartel violence has been placed front and center by the media and this body, Cabinet-level executives deploy their personnel and weigh in on the illicit drug trade and violence that has consumed the southwest border. Mexico is the leading supplier of methamphetamine. Recent analysis suggests that meth manufacturers are adding chocolate flavoring so that their product will be more appealing to a younger customer base. The Office of National Drug Control Policy has an annual operating budget of over \$14 billion. Current estimates indicate that the cartel's profits exceed what we spend on deterrence by more than a 2 to 1 ratio.

By downgrading this position, President Obama is not sending a vociferous message about the future of the national drug control strategy. A key element of the Office of National Drug Control Policy is its control over the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area designation. Stabilization of the southwest border with Mexico needs all the resources of the U.S. Government to include the Federal and local task forces operated and funded by the HIDTA initiatives. The principal purpose of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP, is to establish policies, priorities, and objectives for the Nation's drug control program. The goals of the program are to reduce illicit drug use, manufacturing, trafficking, and drug-related crimes of violence. The ONDCP also develops initiatives and campaigns that educate youths on the ill effects of drug abuse and drug-related health consequences. To achieve these goals, the Drug Czar is charged with producing the National Drug Control Strategy. This delegation of authority was established through previous Executive orders and legislative authority as crafted by Congress.

In some respects, I believe the President and I are on the same page when

it comes to addressing our Nation's illicit drug problem. You cannot solely arrest your way out of this issue. I have always believed that everybody makes mistakes and is entitled to forgiveness. I believe in putting some emphasis on rehabilitation in conjunction with appropriate punishment. The Director of the National Office of Drug Control Policy is supposed to have the ear of the President on how the approaches of rehabilitation and the criminal justice system will meet to curtail this crime. I commend his choice of Gil Kerlikowske to head the ONDCP. However, I question the President's decision to downgrade this important position at a time when our Nation needs key leadership to form our strategy to combat our Nation's addiction to illicit drugs.

It is my sincere hope that this ill-advised decision by President Obama to downgrade the position of the Director of the National Office of Drug Control Policy, which Mr. Kerlikowske will hold, will not come back to haunt Americans for years to come with increased illicit drug use by our children, increased illicit drug manufacturing, increased trafficking, and increased drug-related crimes of violence. That would be a truly tragic mistake for all Americans. The ramifications of a vibrant illicit drug market in the U.S. will take lives, ruin families, destroy potential and leave us a much weaker nation.

I support Mr. Kerlikowske in his new post and I wish him the best. I offer him my support as he undertakes this large assignment. Also, I encourage our President to return the Director's office back to a Cabinet level position where it belongs.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the next Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, ONDCP, has a tough job ahead of him.

The new drug czar will have to work hard to stem the rise in prescription and over-the-counter medicine abuse and the drug cartel violence crossing our southern borders, as well as the issues we have been combating for many years: traditional drug abuse.

The U.S. has a major drug problem. While we are leveraging law enforcement resources for interdiction and drug crime reduction, we also face an active movement to legalize dangerous drugs. I have long been an opponent of the legalizing cause, as I hear all the time how dangerous drugs are to our youth and families.

The new ONDCP Director must emphasize and invigorate the law enforcement community's efforts to stop illegal drug use. He must be a strong leader for all agencies and organizations that are stakeholders in the fight against illegal drugs. He must bring a respect to the office of ONDCP that has been lacking for some time. It is vital that the new Director is able to coordinate domestic and international drug strategy, including ensuring that the Merida Initiative is a success. The next

Director must also be able to bring together and work with coalitions at the local level to combat meth, coordinate policy on the laws directed to eradicate meth and marijuana production, and be engaged in efforts to stop opium production in Afghanistan and Colombia. His drug strategy must produce results at the national and international level to address drug manufacturing, interdiction, prevention, and abuse.

I have some concerns about Chief Kerlikowske's nomination, given his record.

For instance, in 2003, Seattle voters passed Initiative 75, which made marijuana possession the lowest priority for the Seattle Police Department. During the debate, Chief Kerlikowske opposed the measure only because he disagreed with voters determining what laws a police force should enforce. In answers to my written questions, he merely noted marijuana was already low on the force's list. Chief Kerlikowske's lax record on marijuana enforcement concerns me because marijuana is still often the precursor to more dangerous drugs, and it only endangers those who use it. The next ONDCP Director must be a strong opponent of marijuana and all illegal drugs, as well as act as an aggressive enforcer of the laws regulating these harmful narcotics.

Additionally, Chief Kerlikowske apparently has no experience on international supply interdiction. We need someone who understands international drug problems and can help formulate a successful long-term strategy to address them. Chief Kerlikowske's lack of this experience, along with his lax record on marijuana crimes, raise questions for me on his ability to act as an effective Director of ONDCP. However, several organizations, such as the Major Cities Chief Association, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors, and the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, have expressed support for this nominee. While I will not hold up his nomination, I put Chief Kerlikowske on notice that I expect him to provide strong leadership in producing and coordinating drug control strategy and to aggressively work to enforce our drug laws.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during the quorum be charged equally to both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today, at last, the Senate considers President Obama's nomination of Chief R. Gil Kerlikowske to be Director of National Drug Control Policy. This highly qualified nominee has drawn widespread support, and I had hoped the Senate would confirm him before our last recess. I look forward to his being confirmed today with strong bipartisan support.

Chief Kerlikowske has almost 40 years of experience in law enforcement, including in his current role as chief of police for the Seattle Police Department. In his long career in public service, Chief Kerlikowske has demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of narcotics issues. He currently serves as the elected president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association, and he began his career as an Outstanding Military Police Officer Honor Graduate in the U.S. Military Police in 1970. He served as the police commissioner of Buffalo, NY, and as the police chief in two Florida cities, Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie. He worked in the Justice Department during the Clinton administration, where he served as the Deputy Director of the Office of Community Oriented Police Services.

I thank the Senators from Washington State, Senator MURRAY and Senator CANTWELL, for their strong endorsement of this outstanding nominee at our April 1 hearing and for their continued efforts in support of his confirmation.

Chief Kerlikowske's nomination has received numerous letters of support, including strong endorsements from Republican and Democratic public officials, State and local law enforcement officials, the National Center for Victims of Crime, the United States Conference of Mayors, the Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police, and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. General Barry R. McCaffrey, who led the Office of National Drug Control Policy during the Clinton administration, writes that Chief Kerlikowske "is known and highly respected internationally for his knowledge of crime and drugs."

Mary Lou Leary, the executive director of the National Center for Victims of Crime, describes Chief Kerlikowske as a "strong manager," who is "committed to crime prevention" and who "understands the connection between illegal drugs and crime." Arthur T. Dean, the chairman and CEO of the Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America, wrote that Chief Kerlikowske understands that drug policy "must be comprehensive and coordinated" and "recognizes that the perspectives of those closest to the ground—state and

local enforcement, prevention, treatment, and recovery professionals—play a critical role in this strategy."

As a former prosecutor, I have always advocated vigorous enforcement and punishment of those who commit serious crimes. Along with others who serve in law enforcement, I also know that punishment alone will not solve the problems of drugs and violence in our rural communities. I am pleased that Mr. Kerlikowske supports combating drug use and crime with all the tools at our disposal, including enforcement, prevention, and treatment.

I congratulate Chief Kerlikowske and his family on his confirmation today, and I look forward to working with him in the years ahead.

Mr. President, what is the parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is scheduled to vote at 2 p.m. on the nomination of Mr. Kerlikowske.

Mr. LEAHY. Have the yeas and nays been ordered?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of R. Gil Kerlikowske to be Director of National Drug Control Policy? The yeas and nay have been ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BOND) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 1, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 187 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Akaka	Brownback	Collins
Alexander	Bunning	Conrad
Barrasso	Burr	Corker
Baucus	Burr	Cornyn
Bayh	Byrd	Crapo
Begich	Cantwell	DeMint
Bennet	Cardin	Dodd
Bennett	Carper	Dorgan
Bingaman	Casey	Durbin
Boxer	Chambliss	Ensign
Brown	Cochran	Enzi

Feingold	Leahy	Sanders
Feinstein	Levin	Schumer
Gillibrand	Lieberman	Sessions
Graham	Lincoln	Shaheen
Grassley	Lugar	Shelby
Gregg	Martinez	Snowe
Hagan	McCain	Specter
Harkin	McCaskey	Stabenow
Hatch	McConnell	Tester
Hutchison	Merkley	Thune
Inhofe	Mikulski	Udall (CO)
Inouye	Murkowski	Udall (NM)
Isakson	Murray	Voinovich
Johanns	Nelson (NE)	Warner
Kaufman	Nelson (FL)	Webb
Kerry	Pryor	Whitehouse
Klobuchar	Reed	Wicker
Kohl	Reid	Wyden
Kyl	Risch	
Landrieu	Roberts	

NAYS—1

Coburn

NOT VOTING—7

Bond	Lautenberg	Vitter
Johnson	Menendez	
Kennedy	Rockefeller	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and tabled. The President shall be notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT
AGREEMENT—H.R. 627

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 3 p.m. Monday, May 11, the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 55, H.R. 627; and that once the bill is reported, Senator DODD or his designee be recognized to offer the Dodd-Shelby substitute; further that the cloture motion on the motion to proceed be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, Senators Dodd and Shelby have done very good work on this bill. This is a bill that passed the House with some 377 votes. It is a very important piece of legislation. It is bipartisan in nature. I had a press event this morning—actually it was 12:30—with Senator DURBIN, Senator SCHUMER, and Senator MURRAY.

There I made the best case I could to talk about how much we have been able to get done with the help of the Republicans. We have done some good work, and more indication of that is what we have been able to do with this piece of legislation. It is important that we get this done, that we finish it.

We are not going to go to tobacco until we come back. We are going to finish the work we have to do on the supplemental appropriations bill. We hope to get some nominations done. But we have had some real good work. I am very happy with the way we have worked together. We have a lot more work together we need to do, but this is certainly a step in the right direction.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

This will be the last vote of the week. We will not have another vote until Tuesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

NATIONAL TRAIN DAY

Mr. BURRIS. Mr. President, many of my colleagues and citizens across the country recognize this Saturday as National Train Day, a celebration of 140 years of coast-to-coast rail travel in the United States.

I rise to commemorate the proud history of America's railways, but also to mark this as a time for more than celebration.

We must see this occasion as an opportunity to look ahead, to reinvest in our nation's infrastructure and begin a fresh chapter of high-speed rail service.

In May of 1869, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads were joined in the remote Utah desert, connecting the east and west coasts of the United States and completing the very first transcontinental railroad in our Nation's history.

For almost a century and a half since, trains have transformed the way goods are transported and intercity passengers reach their destinations.

From the moment of their birth, America's railroads have represented our efforts to meet the challenges and opportunities of living in a Nation that spans a continent.

The rails that connected Atlantic to Pacific became the backbone upon which we built American commerce and ingenuity. In many ways they defined the fabric of our culture, laying the foundation that allowed our civilization to push the American frontier ever westward.

Every year, Amtrak transports 28 million Americans between 500 communities in 46 States.

Intercity passenger rail is 18 percent more energy efficient than air travel and 25 percent more efficient than automobiles, making the modern locomotive one of the most refined and environmentally friendly technologies in American history.

I have seen this firsthand. My early life was shaped in part by the great American railway. I was raised in Centralia, IL, a small town that was very much centered around the railroad.

We lived along a major line originating in Chicago, a national transportation hub that ships goods, passengers and economic opportunity to every community it touches as the trains set out across the American heartland.

Like many in our town, my father, grandfather and four great uncles

worked many years for the Illinois Central Railroad.

I am proud to be a part of the legacy that he and many others helped to create in Illinois and across the country, a legacy that continues to shape us even today.

But now the aging infrastructure that gave definition to this country is badly in need of repair. The time has come once again to invest in rail travel.

Throughout my career, I have supported high-speed rail technology, which will curb pollution and ease crowding on our roads and in the skies.

Now, under President Obama's leadership, we have the chance to make this dream a reality.

By making a substantial investment in clean, safe high-speed rail, we can renew the deep connections that bind our cities and states to one another and to our shared national identity.

We can create jobs, revitalize our economy, protect our environment, and continue the proud tradition of our national railways.

I ask my colleagues to join with me in reaffirming this commitment to modern rail service. I am glad that so many recognize the importance of railroads in shaping the past we share. But this year, on National Train Day, we should celebrate our past by looking to the future.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Senate Finance Committee, on which I serve, is about to take up the toughest issue in the debate about health care reform; that is, the question of how to pay for it.

To be credible, that means showing that you are not going to sit around and wait for years and years to start cutting costs but, in fact, you are going to start generating savings, in the \$2.5 trillion our country spends on health care, quickly. And you must do it in a bipartisan fashion that is acceptable to our people.

So, today, I offer the four pillars of immediate health care cost containment. Each one of these pillars is an idea that is supported by influential Democratic Senators and influential Republican Senators in the Senate.

The first pillar of immediate health care cost containment requires that